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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable RAPHAEL G. WARNOCK, a Senator from the State of Georgia.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal God, who commands the morning to appear, we honor Your Holy Name.

Lord, guide our lawmakers to find delight in Your guidance. May Your wisdom provide them with food for reflection, morning, noon, and night. Renew their strength, as they seek for ways to reduce the violence in our land.

Lord, provide them with uncommon wisdom to bring greater respect for the preciousness of each person made in Your image. Give us all a greater reverence for the sanctity of every life.

Lord, provide us all with the power to be productive for You in every season of life, as You cause our plans to flourish.

We pray in Your merciful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, March 23, 2021.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable RAPHAEL G. WARNOCK, a Senator from the State of Georgia, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. WARNOCK thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—H.J. RES. 17

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, now, I understand that there is a joint resolution at the desk that is due for a second reading.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The leader is correct.

The clerk will read the joint resolution by title for the second time.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A joint resolution (H.J. Res. 17) removing the deadline for the ratification of the equal rights amendment.

Mr. SCHUMER. In order to place the joint resolution on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I would object to further proceedings.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection having been heard, the joint resolution will be placed on the calendar.

COLORADO SHOOTINGS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, now, this morning the Nation grieves with the people of Boulder, CO, the site of another horrific mass shooting last night. A depraved gunman opened fire inside a local supermarket, killing 10 people, including a police officer. Many more are injured.

Our hearts go out to the people of Boulder and the families of those Americans who have lost their lives so unexpectedly.

Our thanks again go out to the brave first responders.

People kiss someone goodbye for the morning and send somebody off to school and they are never seen again—never seen again. It is just awful. And it has been less than 8 weeks since eight people were killed in another series of shootings in Georgia. We cannot seem to finish grieving one tragedy before another takes place.

It is a reminder that we must confront a devastating truth in the United States: An unrelenting epidemic of gun violence steals innocent lives with alarming regularity. Even amidst the pandemic, gun violence has not receded. In fact, confoundingly, it has grown even worse, and 2020 was one of the deadliest years for gun violence in two decades—a reminder that most gun violence doesn't even make headlines but nonetheless causes immeasurable devastation to communities from one end of our country to the other.

So we have a lot of work to do. I have already committed to bringing universal background checks legislation to the floor of the Senate. There is a hearing today in the Senate Judiciary Committee under Chairman DURBIN's leadership to examine several common-sense proposals to reduce gun violence.

Two summers ago, the Republican leader—then the majority leader—promised there would be a debate in the Senate on gun violence, but it never happened. It never happened.

This Senate will be different. The Senate is going to debate and address

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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